submitted its Report to the Planning Commission in July, 1993. A full Planning Commission meeting chaired by the Prime Minister in March, 1997 accepted the recommendations of the Expert Group with minor modifications. Since then the parameters for estimation of poverty at National and State level are being taken using the Expert Group's recommendations.

(d) The main parameter for estimating the poverty line is the per capita consumption expenditure, which meets the average per capita daily calorie requirement of 2400 kcal in rural areas and 2100 kcal in urban areas along with a minimum non-food expenditure on vital requirements such as clothing, shelter and transport etc.

Mid-Term appraisal of Tenth Five Year Plan

784. SHRI S.M. LALJAN BASHA: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether multilateral agencies are being appointed to advise on the mid-term appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan;

(b) if so, the reasons for associating foreign agencies; and

(c) the measures proposed to safeguard this privatisation and that the cause of Western Corporate giants are not indirectly pushed by these agencies?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) The Planning Commission had announced the formation of Consultative Groups for the limited purpose of obtaining views and perceptions regarding the effectiveness of Plan progammes and policies from Non-Government observers in the process of the Mid Term Appraisal of the Tenth Five Year Plan. Some individuals working with the World Bank, the Asian Development Bank and International Consultancy firms in India were also included in those Consultative Groups which deal with areas in which these agencies are actively involved in supporting Central Government or State Government projects.

(c) Does not arise in view of the dissolution of Consultative Groups with effect from 1st October, 2004.

Connectivity between Delhi and Uttaranchal

785. SHRI KARNENDU BHATTACHARJEE: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Government have been urged by Chief Minister

of Uttaranchal to ensure enhanced connectivity between Delhi and Hill State *via* road, rail and air services not only to attract the tourists and investors but also to make travelling easier; and

(b) if so, the reaction of Government thereon?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M. V. RAJASEKHARAN) :(a) Yes, Sir. Chief Minister of Uttaranchal has requested for connectivity between Delhi and Uttaranchal *via* road and rail only.

(b)Ministry of Shipping, Road Transport and Highways and Ministry of Railways have already initiated action on proposals for connectivity between Delhi and Uttaranchal.

Conference of Chief Ministers of Southern States

786. SHRI M.A.M. RAMASWAMY: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether in a recently held Conference of Chief Ministers of Southern States, the Chief Ministers have demanded a better deal from the Central Government to enable them to speed up the pace of development;

(b) if so, the demands made by each of the Chief Minister from the Central Government;

(c) whether it is also a fact that many project proposals of these States are still pending with the Planning Commission for clearance;

(d) if so, the details of such projects;

(e) the reasons for the delay in clearance to these projects; and

(f) the steps taken by the Central Government to clear these projects speedily?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING (SHRI M.V. RAJASEKHARAN): (a) and (b) The issues raised and suggestions made in the Conference of Chief Ministers held by the Deputy Chairman, Planning Commission in Bangalore on 17.1.2004 are indicated in the enclosed Statement-I (*See* below).

(c) No, Sir.

(d) to (f) does not apply.